



Zero Beat



Hampden County Radio Association, Inc. - our 46th ARRL affiliated year

Volume 2, No. 6

February 1994



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February Meeting: Video
Showing hike up K2

**Happy
Valentine's Day!**

Next HCRA Meeting

The next Hampden County Radio Association meeting will take place on Friday night February 4, 1994 and will feature a meeting about mountaineering. This will be a video tape showing an ascent of the world's most dangerous mountain, K2. This topic was originally scheduled last month, but due to the snow storm it has been postponed to this month. We are also proud to announce that Tech Corner has been reinstated and will begin this month. The topic for this month will be proper repeater operations. Coming up in March will be the demonstration of the portable HF antenna that many of you saw at the December social. This month the doors will open at approximately 7:15 P.M. and the meeting will start at approximately 7:30 P.M. with Tech Corner. The video tape will begin around 8:00. We hope to see you there!

IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| President's Message | Page 2 |
| Ham Radio Rescue | Page 2 |
| Welcome New Members | Page 3 |
| Secretary's Notebook | Page 4 |
| 222 MHz Band Update | Page 4 |
| FCC Proposes Choice of Callsign | Page 5 |



Feeding Hills Congregational Church Route 57 & 187 Feeding Hills, Massachusetts

The next board meeting will begin at 7:30 P.M. on Thursday February 10, 1994 and will take place at Greg's QTH. If you are interested in attending, please ask Greg, N1AEH for directions at the next meeting. Remember, anyone can attend our board meetings.

Coming in March: This is tentatively scheduled to be a topic about home security. See next month's Zero Beat for more information.

President's Message

by Barry Mason N1IJK

Hi! If you're reading this, that means I can reasonably assume that you have remained warm and relatively dry these last few weeks. Hopefully, the weather will be a little more cooperative for our next meeting.

Just another quick "thank you" to everyone who brought in something for Show and Tell. If you missed the December meeting, you missed a veritable potpourri (sorry about the veritable potpourri) of good ham stuff! From antennas to antenna modeling, from modular junk box construction to 5 GHZ skeds (!), from homebrew tuners to a new radio review, there were a lot of great things to see. Thanks again for bringing them in and telling us about them.

I unfortunately have to take a moment to report that one of our members, Joe, WA1OCK, has passed into the ranks of the Silent Keys. I know he'll be missed.

This month's meeting will be a video on K2, held over from last month. Also we have scheduled a Tech Corner on proper repeater operation procedures, so all you new Techs, come early for an informative Corner and don't be afraid to ask questions! The Tech Corner on the "Plumbers' Delight" portable HF antenna will be presented at the March meeting. Tech Corner begins at 7:30.

Two quickies; one, please let Adam Olson, Dave Olson, or myself know when you can help out at the Hamfest. We already have vendors signed up, so don't you wait! And finally, we keep getting repeated interest in our Tech Corner. If you have homebrewed equipment or have something unique (or not so unique) that you can share, let me know. Previous Corners have focused topics from soldering to duplexers. Especially now that we have many new Techs that are interested in upgrading to HF, topics you are familiar with, but feel may be too "basic" are probably just what new hams are looking for. Remember when you first go licensed?

Time to go. Until Friday, stay warm!

73, Barry N1IJK

Ham Radio Rescue

by Todd Cohen KA1TMV

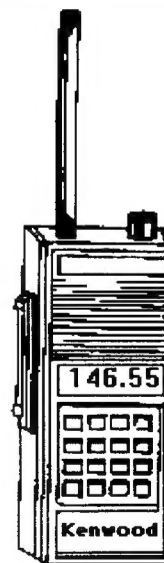
As I entered the road through the old titanium mine in the Adirondack High Peaks region a tense feeling went through my body. The feeling of adventure is always with me when heading into the deep woods. My companion for this journey was John Gagne, a local outdoors friend. It was late afternoon when we entered the woods. We had to cover about 6 miles before making camp at the base of Mt. Allen. The anticipation of climbing one of the toughest trailless mountains accelerated our pace. We both knew that there was rain in the forecast, so we wanted to make it to camp as quickly as possible. I was dressed from head to toe in my special technical gear so I knew I was prepared for whatever Mother Nature could dish out. It was comforting to know I was prepared for the unknown.

After one half mile we started to discuss how comfortable a backpack I recently purchased was feeling on my back. As we approached a bridge which was only about 10 inches above the water line on Lake Jimmy we heard a voice crying out for HELP. We calmly talked, through the echoes caused by the lake, to the distressed person. The voice from that across the lake was that of a man who had lost his way and wandered off the trail. We left the marked trail and started walking through the dense woods around the lake. Surprisingly, we walked a half hour and still did not reach him. We had voice contact with him every 10 minutes to help us locate his position. Each time we tried to contact him we had to yell more often before we got an answer from him. This made us believe that he was in some sort of distress and that he was losing strength.



"Fortunately, I always bring my 220 MHz handheld ham radio, so we decided to try and call for additional help. It's always nice to know that if trouble arises, ham radio will always help."

Todd Cohen, KA1TMV



Silent Key: The HCRA is sad to announce the passing of Joe Wolos, WA1OCK. Joe had a long time illness. He had been an active member of the HCRA for many years.

Continued on Page 3

Zero Beat is a monthly publication except in July and August by the Hampden County Radio Association, Inc. Any article may be reprinted as long as credit is given to the publication and its author(s). This issue would not be possible without the help of Jerry Griffin and his computer equipment. Thanks, EDITOR

Ham Radio Rescue (Cont.)

We were forced around swamps which made the small lake larger. Eventually, we came to a point where we were about 100 meters away from him. At this point we had been searching for the victim for over an hour and it was almost dark. Fortunately, I always carry my 220 MHz handheld ham radio in case of emergencies that might arise such as this one. I quickly decided to call for additional help on the Mount Greylock 220 repeater. To my surprise, I reached my dad, Bob K1CPJ, in Tolland, CT. I informed my father of the situation and he contacted the New York State Police, which in turn contacted the Forest Service. John and I were instructed to exit the area and head back to the trail. By this time it was completely dark outside. We met the rangers about one hour later and brought them back to the spot where we last heard the man. We made a search line and covered every inch around the lake. After about 3 hours of searching the rangers discovered foot prints, maybe it was possible the man had found his own way out without telling us!

In this situation everyone has a opinion of where the mystery man went to. Only if you were there, could you tell if he had made it out or if he was left behind. We never found out what happened to the man. Maybe we

have discovered another chilling campfire story about the ghost of Lake Jimmy. Maybe it was Jimmy himself?

The next day, following our search for the mystery man, we ascended Mt. Allen. On Sunday we climbed other mountains in the high peaks of the Adirondacks, Ester and Whiteface. It was a special day because John Gagne completed his 46th mountain climb in the Adirondacks. There is an award for doing this special task which takes lots of effort and planning. Congratulations go out to John!

73, Todd Cohen KA1TMV

Editor's Note: This article shows how important ham radio can be. Although this particular case remains a "mystery," ham radio is useful for more than just fun! Many times it has saved lives or provided important communication for those who need it. This article was reprinted with minor revisions for the *CampSport Newsletter*. CampSport is an outdoor specialty store in Vernon, CT that Todd works at.

New England ARRL Membership

As of July, 1993 the following lists the percentages of ARRL full memberships to FCC licences for New England. This is a listing by Section.

Connecticut - 33.3%
New Hampshire - 32.1%
Vermont - 31.5%
Western Mass - 31.4%
Eastern Mass - 30.1%
Rhode Island - 29.6%
Maine - 29.4%

There are currently 148 ARRL Affiliated clubs and 31 Special Service Clubs in New England.

The ARRL also has recently announced that due to the importance of higher education and the associated costs, the ARRL has increased the minimum age to obtain a youth membership from 18 to 21 years of age.

Welcome New HCRA Members

Recently, the HCRA held a testing session and many hams were successful in passing the test. The HCRA has a policy that allows people who pass the ham test to receive a one year HCRA membership for free. So we are proud to welcome the following people in our organization.

John Bennett
Paul Morrissey, SR.
C. Tom Sawyer
Earl Shepard
John Walker, JR.
Martin Kibbe
Reid Savoie
William Wood
Dustin Tallent
Ann Mullin

The following people were not part of the above group, but we also welcome them into our club. Glenn Avery KC7LW and Bill Cook N1LJQ.

Secretary's Notebook

by Jim N1DUY

Any member that has not paid their 94 dues has been dropped from the Zero Beat mailing list and is not reading this. If you received this issue in your mail and are reading this, your membership is current thru at least October 1994.

Please take a moment to check the codes in the top line of your mailing label and verify the info which I use to prepare various reports. A description of the codes follows. If any of your info has changed, please let me know about it, so that I can update my records.

I especially need to update my records of license class for Technicians regarding code vs no-code. In many cases the callsign will indicate the sub-class, but starting with the N1Jxx block of callsigns is not a reliable indication. Also, there will be no indication if the code test is passed later. The renewal forms helped me with this, but there are many that are still uncertain.

First is your callsign. Next are four letter codes indicating your class of operator license; VE status; Emergency communications status; and ARRL membership category. Next is a number which is used by the secretary. Next is a one letter code which indicates your HCRA membership category. Last is your HCRA membership expiration date month/year. The meaning of the letter codes is detailed below.

WVWXYZ C V E A 123 M 10/91

(C) Class of operator license

E = Extra
A = Advanced
G = General
H = Technician with HF (tech +)
T = Technician with no-code
N = Novice

(V) VE Accredited

V = VE Extra
V = VE Advanced
N = No
X = Not Eligible

(E) Emergency Communications

A = ARES
B = ARES & CD
C = CD (RACES)
N = No

(A) = ARRL Member

L = Life
A = Individual
A = Family
N = No

(M) HCRA Member Type

L = Life
I = Individual
H = Household
F = Family in Household
E = Associate
Month/Year membership valid thru

222 MHz Update:

from the ARRL Letter

The following article was reprinted from the ARRL letter December 14, 1993.

The FCC has acted to expand privileges for Novice class licenses on the 222-MHz band as well as to create a subband for "weak signal" work on that band.

The changes approved by the FCC in a Report and Order released December 2, 1993, were first proposed in a FCC Notice of Proposed Rule Making in November, 1992 (PR Docket 92-289) in response to petitions for rule making from the ARRL. The effective date for the new rules is February 1, 1994.

Expanded novice privileges

The new rules authorize Novice operation in the entire 222-225 MHz (1.25 meter) band. Novices currently have access to 222.10 - 223.91 MHz, an allocation created in the 1987 "Novice Enhancement" proceeding. At that time the League sought full access for Novices to the (then) 220-225 MHz band. The FCC's 1987 Report and Order, however, limited Novices to 221.10 - 223.91 MHz.

In support of its latest proposal to the FCC, the League said expanding Novice frequency privileges to include the entire 1.25 meter band made sense since Novices already are permitted to use SSB and CW on portions of the HF bands, and there was no reason why they should not be permitted to use utilize those same modes in the entire 222 - 225 MHz band, where other licenses use those modes.

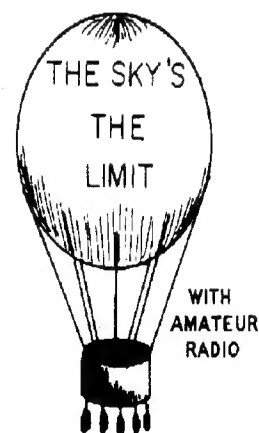
The FCC agreed with the ARRL that allowing Novices privileges on the entire 222 MHz band was a good idea, saying that the changes would allow Novices "to become proficient in a wider variety of amateur service operations" and give them "more flexibility in selecting the mode of transmission."

"Choosing the appropriate mode would result in more efficient use of available spectrum," the FCC said.



"The new rules authorize Novice operation in the entire 222-225 MHz (1.25 meter) band. This will allow novices to become proficient in a wider area of amateur radio."

The FCC new rules on 220 MHz



222 MHz (Novices get more; weak signal segment) cont.

Not repeater control operators

In PR Docket 92-289, the FCC also proposed that Novices be authorized to be licensees and control operators of repeaters on the 222 and 140 MHz bands. The ARRL opposed this idea, as it had during the Novice Enhancement proceeding in 1987. The FCC in its final ruling agreed, saying that Novices lack knowledge about repeater operation. The Commission also noted that allowing Novices to be control operators would diminish the distinction between Novice and Technician classes.

Experimentation encouraged

The League also proposed that a "weak signal" segment be established at the bottom of the 222 MHz band, at 222.0 to 222.15 MHz, similar to what previously existed at 220.0 to 220.5 MHz. Repeater and auxiliary operation will, beginning February 1, be prohibited from 222 to 222.15 MHz.

The League said its proposal was in response to amateurs' loss in August 1991 of 220-222 MHz to the land mobile service, and that a weak-signal subband, which could not be enforced through voluntary agreements or formalized band planning by amateurs, was necessary to allow amateurs to carry on

experiments in propagation and operating techniques.

Some repeater operators, nearly all in southern California, said that severe crowding in the 222 - 225 MHz band there would make a 150-kHz subband untenable.

On the other hand, weak-signal operators said that the loss of 220 - 222 MHz most severely affected them, rather than repeater users, and that repeater owners and users in the 222 - 225 MHz band had been unwilling to accommodate other types of spectrum use.

The ARRL told the FCC that it "remains persuaded that the issue reflects not any one group of amateurs refusing to accommodate another, but rather the difficulty of reaccommodating amateur users displaced from the 220-222 MHz segment."

The League noted that weak signal operators are entitled to pursue a variety of weak signal operations in some segment of the 222 MHz band, and such operations are incompatible with repeater and auxiliary link operations on the same frequencies.

The League said that while it has always supported local, voluntary band planning as a means to accommodate the interests of diverse groups of amateurs, such simply could not work in this case, and that current FCC staffing does not permit it to referee amateur-to-amateur disputes. Thus, a statutory subband seemed the only solution.

FCC Proposes Choice of Callsign

The FCC on December 13 proposed that amateurs be able to choose their own call signs, once a new automated processing system is in place at the Commission's Private Radio Bureau.

Under the proposed system, amateurs wishing to apply for an available callsign would be required to file a form and pay a fee.

Trustees of club and military recreation stations also would be eligible for the new program. At the same time, the FCC cancelled a rule it adopted last summer establishing a call sign administrator program for amateur club and military stations, a program that was never implemented.

The FCC said that at the present time call sign selection by new licenses was not feasible, but left the door open for that possibility in the future.

The FCC said that the new PRB computer might eventually allow amateurs to check for themselves the availability of callsigns, and that the new system might be used to allow electronic filing of applications, making the process easier for the applicant and the FCC alike. More on this will appear in the future, stay tuned to ARRL info for more information.

Reprinted from the *ARRL Letter*.

Briefs from the ARRL

* The FCC has extended to January 11 the comment period in ET Docket 93-62, which proposes to adopt new guidelines for evaluating the environmental effects of RF radiation, based on petitions for more time from CBS and ABC.

The new guidelines would parallel those adopted in 1992 by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and would impose stricter limitations on low power devices such as hand-held transceivers and portable and cellular telephones.

* The first private station DXCC application has been received from the People's Republic of China, from BZ4RBX of Nanjing. Operator Wang Long submitted 102 QSLs which, interestingly, did *not* include a card from his own country. The lucky American in this historic DXCC was K4MIH.

DXCCs have already been awarded to PRC club stations BY4RSA and BY5AC.

Reprinted from the *ARRL letter*

Zero Beat - February 1994

February Meeting:

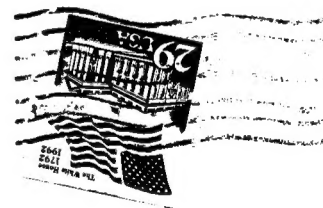
Mountaineering on K2

Friday February 4, 1994

Tech Corner Reinstated This Month!

Editor: Kevin S. Hilinski NR1L

Hampden County Radio Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 482
West Springfield, MA 01090-0482



Forwarding + Address correction requested

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[Redacted address lines]